

Peterson: no write-in race for BV sheriff

Controversial Storm Lake resident Paul Peterson - who has been an advocate for the legalization of marijuana and has accused local police of "corruption" - says he will not attempt a write-in campaign for sheriff this fall.

Peterson fell just short of the minimum limit to be listed as a candidate for Buena Vista County Sheriff after a brief primary campaign, since there was no Democrat challenging Republican candidate and current deputy Gary Launderville.

"For about two days I was a candidate for sheriff," said Peterson in a statement Friday.

"I was one vote short of getting on the ballot, so my effort failed miserably, and no the voters won't have me to kick around any more, because I won't try to do a write in campaign, and that's that," he said.

Meanwhile, Peterson has run into some issues with the state Campaign Finance Disclosure rules.

He said that a friend had offered to create some small cards for the candidate to hand out, which he used to advertise a plan for an "ecumenical" prison ministry program.

Campaign Disclosure:

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Peterson said his plan was for a ministry program in the jail complete with computer and English classes, to keep the spirits up. "I believe it is a sin to merely warehouse people in jail for whatever purpose," he said.

He said that a confidential informant had turned him in for failing to comply with the letter of the campaign disclosure law by disclosing the oak tag and ink that was provided by his friend for the campaign materials - the total of which, Peterson said, is about equal in value to a gallon of gas.

Peterson said he spoke with a representative of the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board, and was told that he needed to give notice to the public, as required by the state, in order to correct the oversight.

Candidate repays donor

Peterson, who formerly practiced law, has named local media and others in a lawsuit; still, he said he must depend on the newspaper to print the disclosure for him free, because he has no funds available to publish the information.

The disclosure is as follows:

"During my recent campaign for Buena Vista County Sheriff, political materials were distributed that did not state who paid for them. They were paid for by Paul Peterson, 6352 Hwy. 71, Storm Lake, Iowa, 50588."

According to Peterson, he paid the friend back for the materials.

Since "no person donated any money for my ill-fated effort to attempt to improve that system," no further disclosure reporting will be necessary, Peterson said.

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